



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

Burroughs, W. M. Chase, Kenyon Cox, T. W. Dewing, Daniel C. French, Charles W. Gould, George A. Hearn, Charles S. Homer, Samuel Isham, Roland F. Knoedler, Will H. Low, F. D. Millet, Edward Robinson, J. Alden Weir.

The exhibition will open early in February and will be held in Gallery 20 on the second floor of the building, which now contains paintings of the British School.

### WINSLOW HOMER: EARLY CRITICISMS

IN comparison with Mr. Kenyon Cox's estimate of Winslow Homer's accomplishment in art, it becomes of interest to turn the leaves of Harper's Weekly for 1861-65 and so to see the first sketches of "our most original artist." The subjects—Songs of the War, News from the War, Thanksgiving in Camp—suggest the character of the work, which varies little in kind from that of Thomas Nast or Theodore Davis. Making all due allowance for the crudeness of the reproduction, we find it hard to read genius into any of these sketches. Mr. Homer had not yet come into his own. They do, however, illustrate well what a recent critic of Mr. Homer noted, his intense interest in the "human problem." They deal less with manœuvres of armies than with the joys or sorrows, the gay enjoyment or the grim endurance of the individual soldier.

How rapidly Mr. Homer's ability developed and with what strides he gained favor both here and abroad may be shown by extracts from Henry T. Tuckerman's *Book of the Artists*, published in New York in 1867, which read as follows:

"At the late Fine Arts Exhibitions in Antwerp and Brussels, several landscapes by American painters attracted much attention. The American Minister at Belgium, Mr. Sandford, writes that an artist of Brussels of much merit and celebrity, declared the works of our artists there exhibited to be among the most characteristic of the kind ever brought to that city, and that admiring crowds were gathered around them at all hours. . . .

"No one is likely to mistake an American landscape for the landscape of any other country. It bears its nationality upon its face willingly.

"Winslow Homer's strongly defined war-sketches are examined with much curiosity, especially the well-known canvas, *Prisoners from the Front*.

"Homer's *Prisoners from the Front*, an actual scene in the War for the Union, has attracted more attention, and, with the exception of some inadequacy in color, won more praise than any *genre* picture by a native hand that has appeared of late years."

Twelve years later, after such pictures as *Snap the Whip*, *The Village School*, *Cotton Pickers*, and *A Visit from the Mistress* had appeared, and after Homer had twice been represented in a Paris International Exposition, the *Art Journal* published in London reproduced Homer's *Watermelon Eaters* and commented thus on the artist:

"Mr. Homer can see and lay hold of the essentials and he paints his own thoughts—not other people's. It is not strange, therefore, that almost from the outset of his career as a painter, his works have compelled the attention of the public. They reveal on the part of the artist an ability to grasp dominant characteristics and to reproduce specific expressions of scenes and sitters; and for this reason it is that no two of Mr. Homer's pictures look alike. His negro studies, brought from Virginia, are in several respects—in their total freedom from conventionalism and mannerism, in their strong look of life, and in their sensitive feeling for character—the most successful things of the kind that America has yet produced."

In the same year Mr. Homer contributed to the Exhibition of the National Academy of Design three pictures, which called forth from the Editor's Table of Appleton's *Journal* this prediction:

"In three pictures this year there are more reach and fullness of purpose than in his recent works, and they indicate unmistakably, we think, that when conditions all unite favorably Mr. Homer will produce a truly great American painting.

The elements are all within him; they are simply to be adequately mastered and grouped."

These words of high appreciation and confidence become doubly interesting when we remember that they were written before

Mr. Homer had produced the works by virtue of which he is called a painter of the sea. To us he stands for much more than to his earlier critics, for a matchless interpreter of the language of the sea.

W. E. H.

